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SERIA LUDO

BY A DILETTANTE





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SERIA LUDO





A Dilettante



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## PREFACE

Many of these trifles appeared long ago in the *St. James's Gazette*, and are now republished with the kind permission of the Proprietors of that journal.

If their resurrection requires some apology, I can only say that I believe no midge ever fluttered for an hour in the sunlight but he would dance again if he could.



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## IN PRAISE OF IDLENESS

Any one acquainted only with the literature and not with the climate of our country would probably wonder at the hard words used concerning the mere ceasing from productive labour and a little folding of the hands to slumber. We have got into a habit of glorifying many of the things we do merely because, in consequence of our inveterate custom, it would be painful to us to cease from them. Hardly any one in this eager air of ours knows how to be idle; yet idleness is still denounced as a vice we are not only capable of but addicted to.

It is a misfortune, and an injustice to our language, that from the very nature of things the term "idleness" has been ill defined by the industrious. Of what use is it to search in the laborious pages of the unresting Johnson for the definition of an enjoyment which he could never have experienced when he wrote? He who looks for a just definition of idleness does but waste his time in a vain expectation; for none but the idle might give it to us, and how shall such men compile lexicons? Here and there a poet has had a suspicion of the virtues of sheer idleness. Lord Byron, perhaps, comes nearest to a right knowledge on this subject;

but he had lived under a warmer sky than most of our poets before him. He calls the occupation of doing nothing—we mean what the unintelligent, industrious world calls doing nothing—by its older, gentler, and more feeling name. True it is that he does but make allusion, in passing on to ruder subjects, to that

“ . . . calm languour, which though to the eye  
Idlesse it seem, hath its morality.”

Most English people, unhappily, will not perceive the morality of this sublime idlesse; but the poor negro, who splits a great gourd and seats himself in one half of it, while the other half inverted protects his curly head—that moist hemisphere the only object in a direct line between himself and the too fervent sun, which is the cause of activity and idleness alike—the negro knows the virtue and wisely feels the delights of soothing idlesse. The preacher will not praise him; but will rather bid him arise and make sugar, and of that rum, to warm others in the frigid zone, instead of cooling himself in the torrid one. But it is permitted to us—so much has our language been distorted—to say that if it is idle of the negro to sit vacant, detached, and separated alike from the vicissitudes of heaven and earth by the insulating halves of a gourd, it is no less idle in the preacher to exhort him to toil.

Yet true idlesse cannot be compassed by the mere cessation from work, useful, useless, or destructive. The operative on strike may indeed be idle—he often is so even when nominally at work—but it is not given to him to taste of the pleasures of idleness;



for beer demands the accompaniment of skittles. The politician and the lawyer are in the same case; they will try to amuse themselves idly—that is to say, they will turn to other work. They will encroach upon the separate profession of the fisherman, or the hunter, or the man of science; but they will not idle body and soul. To exercise the body in order to relieve the mind, or to employ the mind that the body may take rest, is no more to possess idlesse than to stand first on one leg and then on the other, as the geese do, is to lie at length supine.

The word indolence, if we consider how oddly we use it, will reveal to us something of what is obscure in the matter of idleness. Now, indolence, which meant at first—and means still in strictness—the freedom from pain, has got to be a name for one of the favourite vices; yet it might appear strange that not to be in torment should be wrong, even though the virtuous be often fatigued by their excellences. But the word has been so thoroughly wrested from its earliest sense that to describe a man as indolent is now to condemn him for a predisposition to all wrong-doing. It is asked by the “wicked wizard” in “The Castle of Indolence”:—

“What, what, is virtue but repose of mind?”

And, as no worthy person at once confutes the questioner, we may imagine that the poet did not see his way to a triumphant negative. The rights of the matter are indeed obscured because good actions are commonly performed by those who suffer from restless and unquiet consciences. Repose of mind is hardly consistent with the doing of any active

thing which we may be either praised or blamed for. The man indolent—not suffering—will not, the Epicureans teach, give a shilling in charity; for he needs not to purchase contentment, since he has no present lack of it. To go and succour the wretched, or relieve the needy, will be the act of him who is sensitive to the pain which others endure; and he who feels any ache, be it in his own tooth or another's, is not indolent. Yet though to be indolent one need have a tough and unimpressionable nervous system—for the world is full of troubles—why should we blame him who happens to be so constituted as not to feel at all those blows when they fall upon others, which he perhaps would not greatly notice were they to happen on his own shoulders? It is not true to say, “*Nous avons tous assez de force pour supporter les maux d'autrui.*” There are some so weak that wrongs ten centuries old importune them to weep. Surely it is hard that indolence, which denotes only a state of being, like whiteness or smoothness, the negation of darkness and of rugosity—that the absence of anguish, the presence of comfort, should be turned into a quality, and condemned for a bad one.

It must be questioned whether perfect indolence is compatible with the doing of anything whatever—beyond breathing, which consists with sleep and even with the article of death. For he who feels the necessity of putting one leg before the other, or of turning on to his left side when he has lain long enough on his right, must, it would seem, experience some slight discomfort in the position he would change for another one. Any act whatever must properly be regarded as a preparation for in-

dolence rather than a part of it. Said the demon of "The Castle of Indolence":—

"But if a little exercise you chuse,  
Some zest for ease, 'tis not forbidden here."

The indolence of that castle was evidently mixed, like that of all the world. How complete and absolute indolence is compatible with the occurring of the necessity for "some zest for ease," were difficult to explain, except on the hypothesis that indolence is like repletion, and wears off. This indolence, it is plain, is, after all, but a sleepy pleasure, though a perfect one. But idleness is of a more wakeful sort. It was idlesse, and not real rounded indolence, which Thomson described in the verse:—

"Here nought but candour reigns,  
Good-natur'd lounging, sauntering up and down :  
They who are pleased themselves must always please ;  
Nor heed what haps in hamlet or in town :  
Thus, from the source of tender indolence,  
With milky blood the heart is overflown,  
Is sooth'd and sweetened by the social sense ;  
For interest, envy, pride, and strife are banish'd hence."

From "the source of tender indolence" then, we draw idleness—a better possession, though few there be who know how to employ it.

Ah, gentle Idlesse! how many rich and rare gifts do not we owe to thee, which Industry—more hurried in her walk, and more concerned to arrive at her appointed field of work than with enriching herself on the road thither—which Industry, I say, had never stopped to gather for us! Condemn thee who will, I will praise thee and acknowledge thee



as the rightful owner and occupier of Leisure, thine own domain—where thou dost permit and welcome us to stray. If thou appointest there no tasks for us, thy "*Fays ce que voudras*" is yet a command not to go wholly unemployed; for at least we must live—and should we do no more, have not we there an occupation sufficient to engage all the attention of most of us for a lifetime.



## A POEM OF A PAINTED PLATE

Pale Pamphila, of ruddy hair,  
Had won the heart of Corydon ;  
He bathed in scent, put raiment rare—  
In which he greatly gloried—on.  
Through prim parterre and leafy grove  
He sought until he found her,  
'Mid trees that fell in love and strove  
To wind their arms around her :  
The woodbine held in fond caress  
Her foot, that trod so lightly ;  
While ruder brambles hugged her dress,  
And foxgloves bowed politely.

Though Pamphila inclined awhile  
To hear the vows of Corydon,  
Her red lips parted in a smile  
Ere he had half his story done.  
“ My heart,” said she, “ is not for you ;  
I sigh that you must lose me ;  
You well might win it, but you sue  
While all in nature woos me :—  
The bright brook loiters when I gaze ;  
To kiss me—there reflected—  
The iris dips, the swallow plays :  
So go your way, rejected ! ”

The song-birds from the woods have flown  
Since Pamphila met Corydon ;  
She treads the trim parterre alone,  
A little frown her forehead on.  
Her name no more the breezes bear ;  
The fields grow green without her ;  
The rushing stream has ceased to care  
A single rush about her.  
Should Corydon again propose,  
She'd with delays amuse him ;  
Yet comes he not—perchance he knows  
She hardly might refuse him.





## A DIALOGUE

Between an Irish Secretary, in tears, and an Irish  
Vagrant, in rags.

### IRISH SECRETARY.

Why do you sit there wretched by the roadside?  
Tell me your wrongs, and straight will I redress them.  
Rich I can make you with the rents of landlords :  
Forster my name is.

### IRISH VAGRANT.

Name that I well know. Pray, sir, don't repeat it.  
You are the cause why wretched by the roadside  
I must all day sit, and from night till morning  
Down in a ditch lie.

### IRISH SECRETARY.

How can you so speak unto me, your best friend?  
Do not you know my "Bill to cheat the landlords"?  
Listen to me, now; I have found a new way  
How to pay old debts.

## IRISH VAGRANT.

Ah! that's a trick my tenants you have well taught.  
But on my lands I had an ancient mortgage;  
Rents I received none; so the gombeen man  
Forced a foreclosure.

Now I, a landlord by the Jews evicted,  
Wander a-hunger'd, homeless, by the roadside;  
While in the houses I myself have built them  
Rent-free my hinds live.

[Exit Irish Secretary, smiling.]



## A LAMENT

Spoken across the House of Commons

LIBERAL M.P.

Join thy lament to mine,  
Foe though thou art ;  
For the same ease we pine,  
Though kept apart  
By clubs, and politics,  
Caucus and party tricks,  
Sportsmen, in sport we mix—  
Friends we at heart.

CONSERVATIVE M.P.

What joyous days were those  
That once we knew,  
When both the Houses rose  
Ere grouse were due.  
Now to these bunglers we  
Victims must offered be,  
Nor moor nor stubble see  
All autumn through.

LIBERAL M.P.

Gently though breezes are  
    Touching the stream,  
Sadly I think how far  
    From truth my dream—  
That I, as erst, should roam  
Where the grey waters foam,  
And lordly trout bear home,  
    Or humble bream.

CONSERVATIVE M.P.

What though the blackcock call  
    Me from the hill—  
Partridge, and pheasant, all  
    Birds that we kill.  
Ground game, of every class,  
Idly the season pass ;  
In wood, or heath, or grass,  
    Wandering at will.

LIBERAL M.P.

Heedless my leaders, who  
    So us molest,  
Threatening till Christmas to  
    Hold us opprest :  
Scarce, since the Houses met  
One night we've slept, and yet,  
Day by day, less we get,  
    Of needful rest.



CONSERVATIVE M.P.

Yet Bright, I've heard, has caught  
    Salmon in Tay ;  
Hartington stops at naught,  
    Once "gone away."  
Gladstone some game must keep ;  
For, it seems, poachers weep  
In Hawarden's dungeon deep,  
    Hid from the day.



## HELL AND TOMMY: A TRACT

Tommy was the son of his mother, and, as a lawyer—differing herein from a doctor—assured him, of nobody else. To indicate his situation precisely, yet decently, it is enough to say that he was not entitled to bear the family name and arms of his father—who for that matter may himself have been in no better case.

It will be seen, therefore, that Tommy did not start with that absolute certainty of succeeding in the monotonous businesses of life which is never denied to the familiar “child of poor but honest parents.”

He was not sent to Eton, nor even to Harrow. If Debrett had ever concerned himself with Tommy's culture he would undoubtedly have stated that he was “privately educated.” The result was that, at a very early age, Tommy knew a great deal concerning subjects in which no special instruction is given at our seminaries of sound learning and religious education. But in other directions his want of knowledge was chaotic. I cannot say that his mother intentionally kept him in ignorance concerning the origin of the world, of light and darkness, of right and wrong—as nice children are

deceived regarding the origin of themselves—but certainly she left him uninformed as to these matters ; which, indeed, to her did not seem essential.

At the Board School, which Tommy, State-compelled, attended, he was not given precise and dogmatic religious instruction ; for the obviously sufficient reason that the ratepayers differed slightly among themselves as to which might be the best form of worship. He was, therefore, merely taught the unessential doctrines of several Eastern and Western cults by a professing master of all, who believed in none of them.

This ingenuous mind of her child was on several occasions of some advantage to his mother, to whom he partly owed it ; for on her being accused of various offences, which Tommy's testimony might easily have established, he was by the magistrate forbidden to give evidence because he could offer no sufficient information as to where he would go if he did so untruthfully.

As Tommy grew up he could hardly help noticing the fundamental fact that civilised life is a race—and that of the handicap order—nor was he long in perceiving that other contests there are wherein the competitors ran straighter than the men who either owned or rode them ; and that in these also, as the Americans have taught us, he who stoops lowest is carried fastest towards his end. Tommy, then, attempted to make money by betting, as indeed, I understand, most people are so innocent as to do, unless they be members of the Jockey Club.

After some years spent in this business Tommy felt qualified for many games of hazard ; but, having no knowledge of any foreign language, he decided to

practise only where he might enjoy the protection of the meteor flag of England.

A voyage to certain of our Colonies soon made him acquainted with various coloured rulers who, for considerations—into the adequacy of which it is unnecessary to inquire—had granted to him concessions, options, pre-emptions concerning mines with the ore present or absent, rivers with the fishes therein, if any, seas with the right to dive for pearls and the reasonable certainty of bringing up winkles.

In these circumstances it was not very long before Tommy, on his hurried way from his house in the West End of London to his offices in the East one, had driven his motor-car over a poor woman in the street. The habit of an orphan which he wore during the next six months, being much less *voyant* than his usual attire, enabled him at this period to surprise the confidence of several substantial investors who otherwise had escaped him.

Little now remained to complete the entire happiness of Tommy—as he understood it—but to be received into Society; not to be allowed merely to hang on to the skirts of persons of quality—to pay the mistresses of the men and the milliners of the women—but to marry into the family of some great house whose fortunes were *sur le retour*.

Unfortunately for the realisation of this portion of Tommy's programme, he was married already; having, when of somewhat tender years, but still *doli capax*, entered into the holy estate of matrimony at the somewhat minatory suggestion of a Judge of Assize. The immediate advantage of this step had been made very obvious to Tommy at the time he consented to take it, and, had not his affairs



subsequently prospered more beyond his deserving than is usual in even the most dishonest businesses, Tommy might have remained well satisfied with the wife bestowed by his Lordship. But, when wealth comes in at the door, love is apt to fly out by the window, and Tommy's door had in no long time, and of necessity, grown to be a veritable *porte cochère*.

At this critical moment it happened that Society was filling the dull interval between one Sunday and the next with the degustation of the details of what those newspapers which affect to devote themselves to the good of the working classes described as "The High Life Divorce Case"—a suit in which the petitioning Peer and his noble Lady were of a station so exalted that Tommy was considered singularly fortunate in being left as the sole correspondent after several gentlemen of the highest rank had somehow found their names at the last moment struck out of the Petition. He had always been lucky at pitch and toss and at pool, but we must not yet call him *heureux en amour*. Still, fortune favoured him for the present, and Tommy gained his cause—as he understood the matter—in being declared guilty of a violation of that commandment whose language is so shocking to the polite ears of those who condemn it that I will merely thus point and pass on, hoping to be forgiven for my delicacy by all whose good manners, as they trust, may excuse their bad morals.

Nowhere outside a confessional box—had he ever entered one—would Tommy have admitted it; but the fact is he was guiltless in this matter, having, indeed, but the slightest acquaintance with the lady in question. However, his vanity was gratified, the

honour of half-a-dozen happy families was preserved, although—as one of the fathers of these said with a sigh to a brother-sinner, using the language of their boyhood,—“*tulit alter honores.*”

Since virtue is its own reward, vice may fairly look for another. So Tommy made as sure of leading to the altar the lady he had delivered *a vinculo matrimonii*, as though he had been Sir Fortenbras and she some languishing maiden rescued from the Castle Perilous.

His own wife, however, would not co-operate; being, as we know, a person of very inferior breeding, and therefore determined that her husband should not “make an honest woman” of the Countess. Indeed, she was so ill-bred as to express her doubts as to whether even a wedding with full choral service could accomplish this miracle.

Need I say that all Society—that is, all the “Society” known to the newspapers—was ineffably scandalised at this *impasse*, the work of a woman too ignorant to play their games according to the rules, though they had forgiven her this stupidity when manifested at Bridge.

Those who every week propound and resolve “hard cases” exercised all their ingenuity and learning in the code of honour over this one. Their casuistry was suddenly discontinued that they might attend the funeral of Tommy’s wife, and his marriage with the lady she had used so ill.

*Vogue la galère.*



Again Tommy stood at the bar. *On revient tou-*

*jours à ses premiers amours*, remarked a prosecuting Counsel who, having defended him on the first occasion, had been present when his early marriage was arranged—that marriage which was Tommy's sole reason for making away with Mary Ann.

Justice was decreed ; Tommy awaited it, and waiting began to think, since there was now nothing else left to be done.

He couldn't buy nor sell, could do neither good nor ill, and yet he longed to continue this life while yet he loathed it. He suffered physical pain, which the doctor, who could not relieve it, told him for consolation would certainly cease on the next Tuesday. He believed the doctor, for the Sheriff confirmed him, but was in no way comforted. Yet he firmly declined to receive the chaplain ; nor did he demand his early instructor in the moralities.

In the dark hours before his last dawn he called his gaoler, and this simple soul brought him consolation. There was a heaven, he said, a little daughter of his own was there ; but Tommy could not hope to enter it. Tommy, who before had never allowed there was such a place, admitted it now for the sake of argument, since it clearly could not concern him, and he had never been an altruist. But there is certainly Hell, declared the gaoler ; and from his long experience of the ways of the wicked he could assure the moribund that this was his undoubted destination.

So, as the bell tolled, Tommy stepped boldly forth, strong in this sure and certain hope that had come to him at the foot of the gallows.

Would you know his motive : was it repentance,

was it dread of extinction, was it the inborn sense of justice?—consider well this verse of Dante:—

“ ‘ Figliuol mio,’ disse il Maestro cortese,  
‘ Quelli che muoion nell’ ira di Dio  
Tutti convegnon qui d’ ogni paese :  
E pronti sono a trapassar lo rio,  
Chè la divina guistizia gli sprona  
Sì che la tema si volge in disio.’ ”

Meanwhile Tommy hastens to reach the shore of Acheron—and the gaps he left in the world and the scaffold are closed again, from below.



It is nowadays less embarrassing than formerly to attempt to serve two masters. They would seem to have reconciled their conflicting interests by going into partnership.



A century ago we learned, on the authority of a comedian, that “damns have had their day.” In some Deaneries it would seem now to be held that damnation itself is in the same sad case.



Là où il y a une religion établie au profit de l’État, il me paraît très juste de punir les hérétiques comme des contrebandiers.



## EX UNO DISCE OMNES

“Two or three nights ago a potato was dug up in a cottage garden which weighed 1 lb. 5 oz., and the root was in perfect condition. Any one who is accustomed to these things will know what sort of a season it is if this is generally the case.”—Mr. Gladstone at Leeds.

Potatoes weighed they one pound five—  
If every root were healthy—  
Our agriculture then would thrive,  
And farming men grow wealthy.

Were beans to grow as large as figs—  
Should every pod hold twenty—  
There were enough to feed the pigs  
Yet leave the ploughman plenty.

Then, if the wheat grew high as oaks,  
And peas as large as pumpkins,  
I think that quite the richest folks  
Would be our country bumpkins.

While, if each wheat-ear weighed a pound—  
And there were just as many—  
The penny bun, it would be found,  
Would sell at ten a penny.

Each barley-corn a glass, at least,  
Of beer would yield ; moreover,  
That potent parasite called yeast  
Would sprout the size of clover.

Our sheep would walk through six-foot grass,  
And stretch their necks to catch it—  
Until, in time, 'twould come to pass  
They too would grow to match it.

One mutton chop might then suffice  
To feed a score of peasants :  
No more would hunger prompt to vice—  
To poaching hares and pheasants.

No paupers should we then maintain ;  
Yet starved, as now, need none die—  
It were the golden age again,  
Mine own *Juventus Mundi* !



Then ye who think mankind to aid  
With idle dreams, like Plato's,  
Betake you rather to the spade—  
Go ; plant some big potatoes.



## THE FRENCHMAN TO THE HOVA

Until 1883 the Hovas occupied Madagascar ; now the French do.

Said the Frenchman to the Hova : I invite you to explain  
Why you treat our great French nation with such coldness and  
disdain.

'Tis unfriendly that you never dine *chez Bignon* or *Véfour*.

Do not say your land is distant ; don't allege you are too poor ;  
Did you love us, as you ought, then wretched trifles such as these  
Would not hinder our *rapprochement*. You would brave the stormy  
seas,

You would borrow like the Sultan, like Americans would spend,  
And when ruined seek protection from *La France*, your truest friend.  
Yet you eye with cold suspicion all advances that we make,  
And whenever we step forward you two footsteps backward take.  
Can you wonder that such treatment tires our far too patient race,  
Till we twist your neck to gaze into your long-averted face ?  
We'll oppress you till you like us, we will thrash you till you love ;  
For the chastisements of friendship are all other proofs above.  
Your *amitié*, we'll win it with our blood—well mixed with yours—  
Since the friendship won by fighting longer than *amour* endures.  
*À la guerre*, then ! 'Tis your interest to be slaughtered and subdued,  
Until there remain a remnant with right principles imbued—  
Hate of coast-lines too confining, hate of separating seas ;  
Reverence for the right of Frenchmen to make friends of whom  
they please ;

Love for France, the first inventor and improver of the plan  
For the liberty of peoples and the brotherhood of man.

That word *fraternité* was nicely chosen by the French when they discerned their real feelings toward one another, after *liberté* and *égalité* were established.

\* \* \*

Damon and Phintias were friends, but Cain and Abel were brothers.

\* \* \*

A conspiracy of individuals to another's disadvantage is called a crime: in the case of nations it is a concert.

\* \* \*

Mediation is a method of maintaining peace between others to our own profit.



## THE CZAR'S COMPLIMENTS

The letter-carriers referred to, whilst waiting for an answer, amused themselves by occupying Penjdeh. Subsequent events have made the Duke's joke look rather a poor one.

Politeness well a Prince becomes ;  
Nor could the Czar do better  
Than use his pen in Petersburg  
To write a friendly letter.

A letter that the world might read—  
Not all it says believing—  
Such courteous note as Emir might  
Feel honoured in receiving.

Good gospel lines, as oft men get  
On whom is fortune frowning ;  
Such counsel as the safe ashore  
May proffer to the drowning.

A stately sympathetic note,  
Lamenting British blindness  
To Afghan merit : gracious words  
Of compliment and kindness.

Some lines of sadness, some of cheer,  
Of comfort and assurance ;  
A text to tell to suffering souls  
The pleasures of endurance.



But wherefore bid a neighbour look  
To serpents for instruction ;  
Why join to viper's tongue the mien  
Of doves that live by suction ?

Why mention that "the dust of blame"  
On Russian robes will settle,  
If English husbandmen shall come  
To grasp the Afghan nettle ?

Loves he, the Czar, such weeds to plant,  
To cherish, and to tend 'em ;  
To watch their growth in others' fields ;  
And, where they spread, defend 'em ?

What means this promise, too, of troops ?  
Does etiquette of nations  
Require brigades to carry cards  
Of mere felicitations ?

I fear me not. Yet sage Argyll  
These visits sees with gladness,  
Scouts lack of faith in Muscovites  
As "*Mervousness*" and "madness."



## HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

“The desire that your Commissioner should *repair to the Metropolis* in given circumstances need not in any way bear the sense of what is commonly understood by a recall.”—Mr. Gladstone, in May 1885.

The work of Sir Peter Lumsden, and the other English Commissioners for settling the question of the boundaries of Afghanistan, was violently interfered with by the Russian forces attacking the Afghans and occupying Penjdeh. The brief chronicle of the time states bluntly that Sir Peter Lumsden's Commission was recalled by order of Mr. Gladstone's Government.

Come, Stewart, haste away ;  
'Tis the merry month of May,  
And London bright as ever Heliopolis—  
'Tis the season to be gay,  
There are pictures and the play ;  
I've a fancy to repair to the Metropolis.

Let us hurry to be off ;  
For to wait on Komaroff  
Is as dull as to abide in a Necropolis.  
Though the Russians jeer and scoff,  
Afghans dubiously cough,  
I'm determined to repair to the Metropolis.

Let us run and let us ride ;  
Turning not a step aside  
To inspect a Coliseum or Acropolis.  
London is too oft decried ;  
'Tis a pleasure and a pride  
Alike when we repair to the Metropolis.

Gladstone hopes we're on the road ;  
See, he writes from his abode  
In the town his Attic wit names " Megalopolis,"  
" To relieve me of a load,  
Try my euphemistic mode  
Of scuttling, called repair to the Metropolis."



## JUSTICES IN EYRE

### I

They journey merrily who leave sorrow behind them, if it be only the trouble of others. And this, at least, do Her Majesty's Justices in Eyre. Slowly, in the Sheriff's coach, they rumble out of the town, their work done ; and nimbly, as they who run behind the car of Juggernaut, do the Counsel who follow them hasten after. And ever we carry with us, to beguile our journey, books so filled with strange quips and pleasantries that we must encase them in leather of a sad hue, lest all the world should read and fall a-laughing over the mysteries of our art. Whoever should issue an edition of the laws of England, gay in a Pompadour binding, would make more laughter than ever did Rabelais or Cervantes. Yet till this be done I fear not to mention that Blackstone is a jest-book ; for the outside world will neither believe me nor read him.

It is a common error to suppose that our law has no sense of humour because, for the most part, the Judges who expound it have none. I know not whether it has always been the case that the Legislature was, as now, comic, leaving solemnity to the Executive ; but certain it is that the gravest magistrate among us cannot fail to divert a large audience

now and then if he will but content himself with administering the law as he finds it. 'Tis a foolish habit of men that no sooner shall you have stated anything in good round terms than they will seek their opportunity, in asking for an example, to disbelieve what has been told them. Therefore, *Ecce signum!*

It is now but a few days since I listened to a charge against several men, and the wife of one of them, that they did, in assertion of their political creed, throw bricks through the windows of those who differed from them. Now this in itself seems by no means unreasonable conduct, though perchance reprehensible. It is allowed us to hate another for politics' sake, and we are taught that our Constitution depends upon this sentiment for what of force it has in it. To translate our hatred into action is admitted to be our duty; so much so that there are constituted "clubs" and "whips" to urge us into activity. The particular form of this must be left largely to the will of the actor: but surely it should be the accurate expression of his opinions if it is to have any real value? If, then, one be better supplied with bricks than weighty words, or if our words do not exactly connote our opinions, we are sadly put to it if we may not use these same bricks. Nor does the argument end here; for it is said, and truly, that hard words break no bones—no more than fine words shall butter parsnips—and in this their inferiority to bricks and butter alike stands confessed. There is, moreover, a nicety of perception about those who have selected for assault the windows of a man rather than his belief, for you are more likely to discover the one than the other. And further, there is, I take it, in such a proceeding a



symbolical meaning evidenced by the letting in of air where your enemy had, to his own detriment, excluded everything but light; and as to this same light, had so discoloured and debased it by means of blinds, shutters, and curtains that—but for your bricks—he was in a fair way to lose his eyesight and become as one of those fishes in the dark caves of Kentucky.

Be that as it may, however, it is time to take up again my story of the rioter and his wife. Know then that the breaking of windows with a brick—and the same of a stone—is by our law declared wrong, criminal, *malum prohibitum*, and misdemeanour, punishable with fine and imprisonment. Now, as this man and his wife had taken part in an assembly described, by way of making the matter plain, as a riotous one and a routous, they were clearly fit subjects for disciplinary treatment. Each of them had thrown bricks, each had been riotous and routous; and yet he was convicted, and she was acquitted, for so the law, as our ancestors have left it to us, requires. And the reason—if one may call it so—of the thing is that in such circumstances the law presumes that the wife throws bricks under coercion by her husband. It may be that she does so to please herself or to annoy him: but this, it seems, matters not at all if her husband be present. How the law came to this pass who shall say? Perhaps it were useless to inquire whether men so first decreed through gallantry or through pride. For my own part I have made some research in this direction, and I have never seen an instance in which a woman, on the setting up of this defence, has repudiated obedience and insisted on equality; while the earliest case I have been able

to find on the subject is one in which a man attempted to escape the consequences of his own act by alleging that his wife procured it.

Ladies who would mix in politics, bethink you ! Though you may not vote for a member of Parliament you are not condemned to silence. You may express your views in "riots" and in "routs." As you may throw *confetti* in Rome, so may you heave bricks in Banbury ; nor fear to suffer for it, provided only—which may possibly detract from the fun—your husbands be present. I trust no one will think it absurd that a woman who is not afraid to face the dangers of a riotous assembly, and the staves of an exasperated police, should still be supposed to tremble with fear of her husband while she bears herself bravely in the battle ; and I would remind any who object thus of the notorious power of discipline to produce heroes.

An ingenious and learned person in *coif* and silk has suggested to me that it is open to doubt whether, even if a woman beat her husband, it must not be presumed that she acts under his compulsion in so doing ; for, from the necessity of the case, he is present when she commits the offence. I own that to my own judgment this appears somewhat unreasonable, which we are assured the law never is. And, although to hold this to be law would be to advance one step only beyond the position we have reached, yet we must here tread carefully ; for it is plain that to hold suicide by a wife in the mere presence of her husband, to be his act, and not hers, would again be only one step further, though it mean a hanging for him. Thus the last step may be as costly as that notorious first one.

For me, I am no friend to dangerous discussion, or I would, by way of retort, go on to question the history of the *coif* as worn by serjeants-at-law. This, it is said by some, represents the hood assumed to conceal their tonsure by priests who, when *nullus clericus nisi causidicus* was the rule, came to practise in the courts of law. It may be so ; but the *coif* would have hidden just as well a lighter head-ornament ; as it did when Wamba the son of Witless went disguised in gown and girdle. Wherefore I will not go about seriously to confute the learned Serjeant, but will follow to the next assize town the Justices in Eyre.



## THE BOLD LORD JUSTICE

"I do not dissent—it would be unreasonable in me to do so, as my brothers are agreed; but I must say that if I had tried the case I should have felt no difficulty about it. I do not care a fig for the verdict of the jury in such a case."—Per *Bramwell, L. J.*, in *Wilkes v. The North-Eastern Railway Company*. *Field* and *Manisty, JJ.*, and *James* and *Brett, L.JJ.*, agreed with the verdict of the jury.

The palladium of the liberties of Britain, as the Press  
Call twelve judges who have never worn a wig,  
Will always, if permitted, railway companies oppress;  
But their verdict I don't value at a fig!

Justice Manisty, you tell me, with their finding does agree—  
Legal luminary he, though rather dim—  
His judgment joined to theirs will have but little weight with me.  
No! I really do not care a fig for him!

Still, another Judge upholds him in the judgment that he gives.  
Do you think to that opinion I will yield?  
No! I have as much respect for him as any one who lives,  
But yet, I do not care a fig for Field!

Then there's my learned brother who is sitting by my side;  
He also would allow the plaintiff's claims.  
I don't desire this Court in any manner to divide;  
But, I must say, I don't care a fig for James!

Still, my other learned colleague holds the jury in the right ;  
So again with opposition I am met ;  
I am not prepared to differ, as I said—that is, not quite—  
Yet I do not care, not I, a fig for Brett !

Petty jurymen may loathe me for the language that I use ;  
Leading articles my candour may condemn ;  
Half the newspapers of England my outspokenness abuse ;  
A Lord Justice need not care a fig for them !





## JUSTICES IN EYRE

### II

An English Judge had need to be a good casuist—as perhaps some are. Here has one of them been listening with great gravity to a disputation upon the meaning of the term “a poor person.” And let no one hastily conclude, as the Judge at first seemed inclined to do, that this phrase presents no difficulty; for the term is in itself ambiguous, just as is “Poor Law,” which, if spelled without capitals, describes much more of our jurisprudence than applies to the relief of paupers. As to the signification of “a poor person,” it was argued on the one hand that a person in need of parish relief was intended, and on the other that the expression must be taken “in a legal sense.” I at first found some difficulty in determining what those words “in a legal sense” meant, but I did at last perceive that their true intendment was best rendered by “in no sense at all.”

Tired enough with a dispute in which so little ingenuity had been displayed that the question at one time came near being decided out of hand, without any argument “on further consideration” or more solemn appeal, I left the Court and took the first country road I came to. I had not gone

far along it when I saw by the wayside a man dressed so vilely that I knew our officials, and not his own taste, had chosen his clothing. "Come," said I, "here is the 'poor person' in the flesh, and from himself will I discover what he is in the abstract." The fellow gave me "Good day!"—it was all he had to give—and, that he might be none the poorer by his civility, I returned him his greeting. "It is a fine day," said I—glancing from the sun above to the fields around us—"for hay-making." "And for lying by the roadside," said the vagabond. He spoke this with such an air of holding the best of the position, in having no hay to trouble him, that I saw I had before me a disputant more subtle than those I had left in the Courts. "You are right," I said; "the day is a fine one, do what we will with it. But you seem poor, and ought somehow to profit by your chance to get a day's wages." "I am no poorer than another," said he. "I have just dined, and so am rich till supper-time."

Now here had this fellow, in a moment and without reflection, made a distinction so just that it is no wonder the lawyers never thought of it. To talk of the rich and the poor as of the short and the tall, the dark and the fair, is a fallacy, in that it takes no note of time—time, which never must be ignored, be it only a moment or the length of an English summer. I hope, however, that I can see the justness of an argument without seeming to allow its force; and I replied by pointing out to this rich man that he was rich only for the instant. "The moment," said he, "is all. And you, sir, it seems to me, have no right to say that you are now richer than I am because your wealth is such that you will not again be poorer. It is

to confound the present with the future, or, to speak more accurately, the what-may-not-be." "Where in the world," said I, astonished to find in such a situation one so skilled in dialectics—"where did you study to such purpose?" "In the workhouse," said he, as though he named Bonn or Heidelberg. "You are, then, a 'poor person'?" said I, with a slight feeling of triumph. "A 'poor person in a legal sense,' since you have been in the poorhouse." "Very likely," said he. "In some sense are not all of us poor enough? Yet that does not prevent us from being rich also." I answered to this: "It seems to me there is here some contradiction." "There is none," said he, "except in a 'legal sense.'" "Which cannot affect the fact," I added. "I have felt that in the workhouse," said he.

I confess that so far I was not satisfied by this explanation at all points, and I now said to the pauper—for so in name he was—"You still appear to me to be indeed a poor person; for, even if you have enough, you have still nothing to spare." At this he looked up at me and laughed, saying, "Oh, spare me that old falsehood, '*Le nécessaire c'est le superflu.*'" Then to my confusion I remembered how it is taught by Vasquez, the learned Jesuit, where he discourses on the obligation to give alms out of our superfluence—I remembered, I say, that Vasquez affirms that not even kings have anything to spare to others, and so may be excused from almsgiving.

I consoled myself for the discomfiture which the vagrant's reminder and my own memory had brought me by slipping back into my pocket the shilling I had been prepared to bestow upon him, and, wishing the wayfarer a good supper when he needed it, I returned

to the Courts. There the dispute still continued. The Counsel had got the length of contending that any one received into a workhouse is *ipso facto* a "poor person," while the Judge seemed to think no one a pauper who had any money in his pocket. The action which gave rise to this contention was for false imprisonment, the workhouse being the place of incarceration.

Why, my learned friend, when you argued that to be in a poorhouse is to be poor—why were you not reminded that "stone walls do not a prison make," nor brick ones a pauper? *Cucullus non facit monachum*—and Charles V. at Yuste, was he not always the Emperor we know of? Your excuse is in your position, for truly you could not, like me, leave the Court and have the question resolved for you by the roadside. Yet the judgments St. Louis gave in open air were no worse than I have heard *in banco*. If we cannot revert to sittings in that simple *forum*, I for one will go study there now and then, and will bring you back, as now, a note of what I hear decided.

Let us not again complain of the vague wording of our Acts of Parliament, when we may invite the legists of the hedgerows, who now would make our laws, to do us the favour to interpret their doubtful meaning.

As to this case, I believe the Judge solved it in the sense understood by the vagrant.

\* \* \*

If the saying "*Les absens ont toujours tort*" be true, it is demonstrably just—since they must of necessity be elsewhere, and in that place take more than their share of good at the expense of other absentees.



Cunning men are best deceived by frank ones. So to tell the truth and shame the Devil shows the father of lies for a fool—as are all those who will not trade on the maxim that honesty is the best policy.





## A NEW REGIMEN OF HEALTH

“It is commonly believed that after all there is no better auxiliary towards the enjoyment of health than hard work ; and that is a condition, that is an assistance, towards the preservation and improvement of their health which her Majesty’s Government have enjoyed and are likely to enjoy for some time to come.”—Mr. Gladstone.

To keep yourself in health the way is plain :  
Toil till you tire ; fatigued, commence again ;  
Let every hour some harder task supply ;  
Live but to labour, and, for respite, die.  
Should cares of government your time engage,  
Work to make work, and longer toil with age.  
Where’er content you find, this doctrine spread,  
Who covets nothing in effect is dead ;  
Stir sleeping dogs to howl about your ears ;  
To run is wholesome, and he flies who fears.  
Should home affairs no mighty tasks afford,  
Unsheathe and brandish, sheathe unstained your sword.  
If there be war abroad, work hard for peace ;  
This gained, let not your daily toils decrease,  
But, lest dull sloth from peace and plenty breed,  
Let civil strife to foreign wars succeed.  
Where’er is treason, nought but want behold ;  
Small urchins flog ; leave traitors uncontroll’d,  
Until no longer they in ambush lurk,  
But murder boldly—and so make more work.  
So shall each labour crops of labour bring,  
And fresh abuses, where you harvest, spring.

Seek the great rocks that stand unshaken still,  
And roll the largest up the steepest hill ;  
Conflict, and turmoil, and distrust enjoy ;  
Rest, only rest, can your rude health destroy.  
To bruise, to break, to cut with axe, is breath ;  
Turmoil bears health along, and Order death.



## A REMONSTRANCE

The Birmingham Chicken to the Home Secretary.

Sir William Harcourt has written to the magistrates,  
calling their attention to "the epidemic of prize-fighting,"  
and desiring them to cure it.

Why, Sir William, why so hard on us poor chaps  
As does a little milling now and then?  
I've heard tell how in giving hardish raps  
You're the neatest and most punishing of men.

Surely fighting can't be now agin the laws!  
Look at Ireland. Ain't they fighting over there?  
Yet, Sir William, that don't trouble you two straws,  
Or you'd say to Mr. Forster, "See it fair."

When a dozen Irish blackguards set on one,  
And batter him to death, as now we see,  
Ain't it just that to 'em something should be done  
Ere you meddle with "The Nobby One" and me?

A prize-fighting epidemic—so you say—  
Is a-raging. Man to man we stand and fight.  
Is that wrong because it is the English way;  
When the sides are no ways even, is it right?

Does to fight for half a sovereign make the sin,  
Since to fight for half an acre isn't wrong?  
Ain't the land a prize—and richer than the tin—  
If to him who wins it fighting it belong?

Still, if law's agin us, leave us to the Beak;  
Why go writing him to let us have it hot?  
You're too strong, or Mister Forster is too weak;  
Let us slide, as he lets off that Irish lot.



## OF DEMONSTRATIONS

Demonstrations are in affairs what scarecrows are in husbandry. They rest upon deceit, and are designed to produce terror disproportioned to their real efficiency. If hitherto they have been used for the most part by certain politicians as a convenient means of producing disorder at home, it is nevertheless in the fitness of things that they should at last be employed for the promoting of their designs abroad.

It seems hardly to have occurred hitherto to any one among the many who have heard of demonstrations to inquire what it is that they demonstrate. The assemblages to which we are accustomed in London do indeed make apparent, for one thing, how many noisy fellows may live there at once without being anything more than an occasional nuisance to other people ; but probably this is not by any means what the demonstrators desire to set forth.

There is, however, an important question of morals involved in demonstrations, and it is to be hoped, for the sake of Christendom, that the Sultan, among others, has not yet found leisure to consider it. He and his pashas may well be excused if they shall look upon our demonstration as proving just those facts which it makes visible and no more ; and so shall merely find entertainment in watching a number of

ships of war of all nations sailing peaceably before them, as though for the mere sake of proving that modern vessels, though not belonging to the same country, can accompany one another without mutual danger. If, however, the Turk, on hearing that these manœuvres are a demonstration against himself, should take the matter seriously, and ask to have it proved to him that he is morally wrong and his enemies justified, then surely an Ambassador, not an ironclad, could demonstrate this the more logically. Yet it is possible that the Turk does not even yet believe all that diplomatists tell him, and therefore it may be convenient, though perhaps wrong, that a ship or two shall lie to him circumstantially, and so he shall once again be deceived.

This seems to place demonstration as a method of argument in an intelligible light: and I trust no one will say that a demonstration, as understood in political affairs, cannot at all prove what is just or true, but may merely indicate strength, numerical or physical; for I cannot suppose that advanced thinkers would be content to found their supremacy on so unphilosophic a base as *la raison du plus fort*.

It was one of the chief sins of the old nobility of France that in an age of reason they would not abandon the habits of a pristine race; so that he who had ten valets passed before him who had two, and he, in his turn, before the most deserving of nature's nobles who might happen to have no body-servant, and perchance no breeches for either himself or a lackey. But such a demonstration of power was very properly resented by the leaders of thought of a century since; and it was by them argued, very convincingly, that no superior merit in the master



is disclosed by the stature or number of the footmen who follow him. So superiority of right, to take another instance, is not proved whenever a band of brigands make a demonstration before a traveller ; and the wayfarer even knows well—as I trust the Sultan does not—that mere concert proves nothing but a common hostility for the time being, and does in no way connote a mutual friendship.

Suppose the Porte to turn logician, and to formulate in a State paper to be communicated to the Powers the matters proved to demonstration by the fleets of Europe, the proposition would stand somewhat thus :—

English and French ships and seamen have before now destroyed one another, as at Camperdown, Trafalgar, and elsewhere ; Italian and Austrian navies have met in fatal conflict, as at Lissa. Russian and English sailors were opposed before Sebastopol, where, had not the ships of Muscovy dived like her ducks, the English had surely taken them. Wherefore it hath been argued that these several nations cannot agree together on the water. Yet here are representatives of all these navies collected into a fleet and sailing together ; and among them all is, it is said, one little German ship of war. This then proves that the fights of Trafalgar, Lissa, and Sebastopol are not to be renewed this afternoon ; and, moreover, that, like Alsace and Lorraine, certain milliards are not carried on board the German gunboat. *Q.E.D.*

This is everything that the congregation of flagships which we have been told to expect will in logic demonstrate ; yet one would like again to ask our Government—though they certainly would make no

definite answer—whether this is all that they intend to prove, or whether they hope that the Turk, being less perfect in his Euclid than in his Koran, will not reason correctly upon the premisses before him, but will foolishly conclude that St. Sophia is to be taken by blue-jackets.

If our rulers do indeed argue in this wise, we may wonder how they can consent to so disingenuous an artifice as that of attempting by means of a naval uniform stuffed with straw and armed with a broomstick to scare the birds from Albania lest they spoil the harvest for the rats. To actually shoot crows or men is a straightforward and unmistakable, if somewhat violent proceeding; but to make believe that you are about to kill them, having all the while no real intention of doing so, and that for the purpose of influencing their conduct by unfounded fear, is in the highest degree immoral, and does in the end deservedly earn their contempt. What, then, should be said of him who should admit with ambiguous voice that the crows have done nothing worthy of death, yet should none the less send out against them a native hobgoblin in company with a foreign *épouvantail* for the increasing of their fright, and so should make false pretence of being about to exterminate them utterly by battue? Surely if this conduct were used to the crows and not to the Turks, there are they who would condemn it. If no one does so at present, let us not, however, hastily conclude that none disapprove. It may be that they fancy the crows will see the straw beneath the cocked hat and plume, and may refuse to be scared by a solemn concert of bogeys, to the discomfiture of that ragged regiment. This we ourselves have done

before now, remaining confident when by all rules we should have fled in terror—as happened once when we were at war with the Chinese, and were made the subject of a demonstration by a number of military acrobats, whose proceedings might truly have disconcerted our army had we not known beforehand that the forces who head-over-heels advanced against us threw no stink-pots, but somersaults only.

Of course it may be that the birds are nervous. They may be yet so fluttered by the volleys lately fired into their flocks from shotted guns that they will not stay to distinguish between appearances and reality. And if they shall fly screaming eastwards, Europe will laugh at the success of its fraud—and, for me, I will laugh with them. Only let us not hear too much rejoicing of the righteous, nor proclaim, as though it were to our credit, that we never were for involving our country in an actual war. If, however, our “demonstration” be nothing but a cunning stratagem, behind which is concealed no honest determination to make a campaign or two, then, should it succeed, Machiavelli has praised it already by anticipation—which surely is justification and honour enough.

\* \* \*

Politics is the sport of peoples.

\* \* \*

The opinions of men are tidal—subject to ebb and flow—and are very possibly governed by the moon.

So their actions and their laws move in cycles. The franchise and parliamentary government are merely a part of the pretence to reconcile the doctrine of free will with that of predestination.



The Speaker is the conscience of the Commons—  
and is appropriately silent.



## ULYSSES ON A STEAMBOAT

Mr. Gladstone was, in September 1880, on a cruise off the coast of Ireland. He was credited with the intention of studying the facts of the Irish question through a telescope.

Ulysses—of Downing Street, not of Ithaca—by chance approaches in his ship a certain island surrounded by a melancholy ocean, and hears this song: with what effect upon his future conduct is as yet unknown:—

Oh, help us this green little isle to secure,  
Where potatoes are plenty and whisky is pure ;  
Where the rent-seeking bailiff himself, as he drops  
To our gun, leaves his bones for enriching our crops ;  
    Where riot and battle  
    And rapine a trade is,  
    And hamstringing cattle  
    The pastime of ladies ;  
Where theft stands for honesty, begging for labour,  
And religion means hating and stoning your neighbour.

Here grant we may live at our ease on the gold  
We shall get when our landlords' broad acres are sold,  
While you neutral remain in the war we have planned  
For shooting the buyers and keeping the land :  
    As a people we feel  
    For such fetters unfit ;  
    So all laws we'll repeal,  
    And all taxes remit.  
While—the Union dissolved—we shall straightway advance  
From "Home Rule" to "No Rule" in concert with France.

## TO A MILITARY CRITIC

Lord Cardwell's army takes the field ; and you  
Who hold them all too young to leave their home,  
O'er icy crags or burning wastes to roam,  
Of me demand how these thin ranks, so new  
To arms, again the valiant deeds may do  
Of sires who led the Normen o'er the foam,  
Broke their poor spears against the ranks of Rome,  
Or conquered France with stubborn staves of yew.  
Indeed you say these soldiers infants are,  
Whom not with civil rights we yet endow ;  
Unfit, therefore, through foreign wars' alarms  
To drive or follow dread Bellona's car.  
Bethink you yet one moment, and allow  
They're safest, since they infants are, in arms.





## BENI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE

A song very popular between 1880 and 1886, but now  
gone out of fashion.

What is our flag, that we should make  
So rare a fuss about it?  
A tinted rag upon a stake;  
We well might do without it.

Whene'er it flies, where'er 'tis borne,  
Some warlike gust will rend it;  
Then bloodshed dyes the standard torn,  
And I am taxed to mend it.

To live in peace, let honour slide—  
To lapse, the statesman's term is—  
So wealth increase, the blush shall hide  
Beneath his epidermis.

Should Russia claim the Isle of Wight,  
Consult some foreign nation;  
Nor think it shame, though wrong or right,  
To beg for arbitration.

Let England sink ! Her time has come  
To yield to other races :  
Too selfish sounds her world-wide drum  
In all Earth's fairest places.

Haul down the flag. No longer make  
Fatiguing fuss about it ;  
Tear up the rag, then burn its stake,  
And live content without it.



## FROM THE KINGDOM OF YVETOT: A FABLE

This ancient land, so full of quaint customs, has been but little heard of since the death of that most estimable Roi d'Yvetot, lamented by *Béranger* in verse, and by all his people in prose and crape. The poet described the kingdom of his day very fairly in singing of its Prince; but Yvetot, like other places, has gone through a good many changes of late years, and therefore some account of the country and its government may be interesting at this moment.

And first let me mention that the people of Yvetot pride themselves much on the continuity of their national history. Wherefore the policy of the late Prince is still faithfully observed by the present rulers of Yvetot, though last year there was in power here a Ministry which departed from his maxims and practice. You are aware that of the late King it is said in his praise:—

“ Il n'agrandit point ses états,  
Fut un voisin commode,  
Et, modèle des potentats,  
Prit le plaisir pour code.”

But now, in pursuance of this happy system, the boundaries of Yvetot are still not only not widened, but are even drawn closer together, thus making

what remains of the empire more solid, as was explained to me very carefully. In this way, I was informed by one of their strategists, is a beleaguered garrison made more compact when—the barriers, ramparts, sallyports, and all external lines of defence having been abandoned—they seek refuge in the keep or dungeon, and at last in the well, the safest place of all. It is singular, however, that they whose policy it is in foreign affairs to be always in retreat are yet the very men who take to themselves the title of “advanced politicians”; but so, in the sense of being ever the most advanced on the road home again from abroad, they undoubtedly are.

I need hardly tell you that there is now established in Yvetot, as everywhere else, what is called Constitutional Government—a system the object of which, as there practised, seems to be to prevent any one from being systematically governed, and to secure that all shall be continuously taxed. To this end the counties and towns send to the capital of the kingdom some hundreds of men to advise the Crown; and this multitude is selected for the most varied reasons: as that they hate the Sovereign or adore him; that they are rich and of a good position in life; that they are not in society, nor likely to get there; that they have decided opinions, or that they have none; but most of them are sent to the Parliament merely because they have never been there before.

It would astonish you to hear what questions are debated in this assembly, and in what manner. The other evening I was introduced into the Chamber by one of the door-keepers—a native of an island appurtenant to Yvetot, and brother to a leading member of the now dominant party. Here I listened for several

hours to a debate as to whether it were allowable, and a privilege of Parliament, for some members to assault others during the sitting of the House.

After much debate it was resolved that there was indeed some such privilege; but to be exercised by the whole House, acting in its corporate capacity, through its *Podestá*, or Serjeant-at-Arms. No sooner had this official removed, and deposited in the Buffet, the protagonist in this contest, than some one proposed that the President should "report progress," which the poor man—no progress having been made for some months—seemed reluctant to do, until it was explained that progress was used only in the parliamentary sense; which I was instructed means proceeding to talk while disposing of nothing. Thereupon was commenced a discussion concerning the police force employed in a certain portion of the dominion; and on this subject it was said that—since the greater part of the inhabitants of that district were engaged, or wished to be, in the commission of acts forbidden by the law—it was unjust in the Executive to employ force to check pursuits which already suffered from the disapproval of the Legislature, and the example of the late worthy Prince was commended for the imitation of the Government, the following verse being cited from the memoir of him:—

" Il faisait ses quatre repas  
Dans son palais de chaume,  
Et sur un âne, pas-à-pas,  
Parcourait son royaume.  
Joyeux, simple et croyant le bien,  
Pour toute garde il n'avait rien  
Qu'un chien.  
Oh ! oh ! oh ! oh ! ah ! ah ! ah ! ah ! "

I must say that the last line of this quotation was, by consentment of the whole House, exceedingly well rendered, and many times repeated—in fact, it has been calculated that some weeks of the present session have been consumed in making noises of that sort. It is supposed by many that after a time the garrison of that part of the realm of Yvetot of which I have spoken will indeed be reduced to one watch-dog, in conformity with ancient custom; and that, when the licence to keep him shall have run out in default of renewal, he too will be allowed to expire—if he be not earlier lapidated.

I regret to say that there has arisen lately in Yvetot a dispute between the two Chambers of the Legislature because one of them has thrown out a Bill recommended by the other. I have, indeed, heard it said that the Lower House is at once so wise and so faint-hearted that it never would have dared to pass this measure but that it was confident of the greater courage and independence of the Upper House. Be this as it may, the Commons, as they are called, profess to be very angry with the Peers on account of this matter, and even threaten them with extinction for performing the part allotted to them by the Constitution. I am informed, however, by certain learned men here that these two assemblies of Lords and Commons did formerly meet in the same chamber and deliberate together; and I am told that the Peers, should the Commons attempt to deprive them of their separate position by a resolution of their House, will once again walk into the chamber they left long ago, and there record their votes. For my own part, I have heard no objections made to this course except that it would oblige one



or two of the Commoners to remove their feet from the benches, that the Lords might sit there.

Such are among the vicissitudes of Yvetot; and, after all, how slight is the difference between one ruler and another! You remember how we are told of the late king that—

“ Il n'avait de goût onéreux  
Qu'une soif un peu vive.”

Now the people is king here; and those lines are, by all admission, as true of them as of the ruler to whom they have succeeded. Meanwhile, their only boast is, as they roll over from one side to the other, that, like their prince of old, they also are

“ Dormant fort bien sans gloire.”



## THE REVERSAL OF THE FLAG

"The British ensign on the flagstaff in the market-place at Pietermaritzburg has been reversed, and the Transvaal flag hoisted above it, as a mark of defiance. Another British flag was also trailed through the mud in the streets."—*Standard*.

Great news and glad, we hear at length ;  
The Boers so bold grow bolder ;  
Where Britain flies, they gather strength  
And shoulder stand to shoulder.

They grasp the flag a thousand years  
Have seen o'er freemen flutter ;  
They tear it down ; and no one fears  
To trail it in the gutter.

Our late reverses to explain,  
Or else, perchance, to dry it,  
They haul it up its staff again ;  
There upside down they fly it.

A neat and emblematic stroke,  
Some deeper meaning hiding—  
Of policies reversed it spoke,  
Of power no more abiding.

And we?—with modest pride we learn  
Our Union Jack they treat so ;  
And smile the more with every turn ;  
We've grown to love defeat so.

What's bunting, that a nation should  
Have thought or care about it ?  
'Neath any flag a peace is good,  
But none the worse without it.

Then fly our standard as you please,  
Above the Dutch or under ;  
Or, lest it tremble at a breeze,  
Its blazon tear asunder.



## A BALLAD OF RESPONSIBILITY

"The Ministry have resolved to accept without reserve the responsibility of leaving the Irish Executive to face the difficulties of the situation in Ireland without other resources than those of the ordinary law. It is unfortunately too plain that outrages of the most detestable kind are of daily occurrence, and that terrorism unparalleled in recent times has been imposed upon three out of four of the Irish counties. It is equally indisputable that the law is almost powerless to prevent these crimes or to punish the criminals."  
—*The Times*, Nov. 1880.

Be happy, Irish landlords,  
Though your rents are never paid ;  
Murmur not, because by cut-throats  
In the dark you are waylaid ;  
If beleaguered in your halls,  
Be consoled to think that we  
Quite admit that on us falls  
The responsibility.

With your acres lying bare,  
Not a coin in your purse,  
Calm and confident attend  
Fresh afflictions even worse.  
So when on some starless night,  
From your burning homes you flee,  
You'll remember, with delight,  
Our responsibility.

The police, you justly say,  
Not a murderer can catch ;  
And the rogues may live at large  
Who do nought but treason hatch.  
Yet though civil war may rage,  
Have you not our guarantee  
That 'tis peace ; since we engage  
Our responsibility.

Little comfort can you find—  
Thus you mutter—in a phrase  
Which, to those who live in fear,  
No security conveys ;  
It were better did it stand  
For the rope and gallows-tree,  
That expression, vaguely grand,  
“ Our responsibility.”

And, in fact, we must concede  
That our meaning is but this :  
Your unprofitable servants  
You—if living—may dismiss  
From the pay and pride of place :  
So, in Council, we agree  
You shall certain ruin face—  
We, responsibility.

## CONFESSIONS OF A PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATE

An anxious and nervous person, who proposed to offer himself to a certain constituency as a candidate for its suffrages, pondering over the many doubts and difficulties that beset all conscientious men in his situation, resolved to ask advice of another, and like-minded person, who had already found his way into the House of Commons, and who seemed to be quite easy in his mind there. His request was fully and handsomely complied with in the following letter :—

My dear —,—At the last election I, like many others whom I have since met at St. Stephen's, found it necessary to consider my position with regard to what the law calls corrupt practices. I, of course, took from lawyers the best advice as to the means of evading the existing statutes, although it was my ambition to help to make new ones. I soon found that the advice given to me by my agent involved, if followed, some nice cases of conscience ; and in order to the resolving of these I took counsel more ghostly than attorneys give us.

And first, as the most necessary knowledge, I



demanding of my confessor whether it is allowable to offer money to a voter as the price of his vote? I was answered that it is: because no man ought to vote with no motive at all, but should exercise his judgment; and although the law forbids under penalties the offering of a sovereign to a voter as a motive to actuate him, yet there is no reason why the law should be obeyed, if he who breaks it is prepared to solve himself by payment. And it was instanced to me, by way of example, that a certain association for the gaining of seats had authorised the conveyance of voters in circumstances where the law forbade it, because only a money penalty followed the doing of the prohibited act by one not an agent, but the seat was not vacated. Observe, moreover, said my confessor, that—as regards the moral quality of the act—the nature of the penalty to be paid makes no difference—and indeed it is in morals better, as being more heroic, to commit an offence which imperils your seat and your personal liberty, than to confine yourself to such as touch merely your pocket.

Then, said I, may we so extend this doctrine as to allow ourselves to break any law we please, offering to offended justice a certain sum, or something by way of purchase money, *douceur*, or *solatium*? Yes, said he, of a certainty, as is now proposed (for so it then was) in the case of those who desire to expose their children to disease, as the Spartans did theirs to the weather. This privilege a certain right honourable gentleman would allow to all who are not too poor to pay a pound for their fancy. Nor need the motive concern us; for he who should wish to be

relieved of his children by smallpox would be charged no more than he who desired merely to save them the pain of a puncture. And have you not read now and again how, when a woman has been blessed with three children at once, her Majesty (for the *jus trium liberorum*, in this modified form, obtains among us) sends her a pound for each of them. And surely it is admirable reasoning from this that he who would make away with one of these should in turn remit twenty shillings to her Majesty. True it is that in not extending this doctrine to all offences, however grave, we are somewhat behind the Chinese : though, should our present Ministry continue in power, we may hope soon to overtake them ; for in the Celestial Empire it is recognised that the penalty for murder is to be paid, as here, by a life ; and, since one neck is as good to hang by as another, a murderer may pay the state with any person he pleases, either himself or attorney.

My conscience is still so tender that I felt obliged to put this further question to my adviser. Whether it were justifiable in a candidate to give bribes with his own hand, or only when he employed an agent to distribute them ? And I was answered, greatly to my surprise, that it is as allowable to give in one way as in the other. I was informed that personal bribery is visited with the additional penalty of disqualification for a seat in Parliament for a certain time ; but this, I was told, is a rule made in order to exclude insane persons from the House. For, as it has never been held less charitable to give alms with another's hand than with one's own, so no one thinks it less blameable to corrupt men by deputy ; but we all see it to be less foolish, and our Parliament was origin-

ally—so antiquarians tell us—our Assembly of the Wise, and should remain so.

Should a man keep, I next inquired, a seat which he has obtained corruptly? For a moment my confessor stood astonished: to nobody had it occurred to ask this question before. However, after a few moments' reflection he answered me: Yes; for no one, though he has given bribes, can tell that they have procured him a vote which he was not secure of were no bribe given; in which case he has paid for what was his own already, and so has a double right to it. But were the fact otherwise, and the seat bought with gold, which else he had not obtained, then to resign were to give it back to those who had sold it, and so to pay double to dishonesty, which deserves no wages whatever.

I then demanded whether I should be justified in giving pledges against my belief in order to secure my election. That, said my confessor, is a question of some nicety; but I incline to advise you that you may, seeing that whether you observe them or not you will do as conscience requires. For, should you act according to your word so given, you will hold to your promise, and thus speak the truth, which is well; but, on the other hand, should you neglect your word, and do what you hold right at the moment, independently of your promise, you will still act according to your conscience. Yet I should advise you, said he, to do as most candidates I have met—promise without allowing yourself to have any opinion whatever on the subject; and so shall you save yourself from this dilemma.

It is a common practice in politics to attribute to

our opponents opinions which cannot be discovered in anything they have said or written; and after having for some time indulged myself in this course of conduct, I questioned my confessor as to whether it were right. He answered that it surely was so; for, said he, we know well that what is spoken by a candidate does very seldom represent his real belief, and therefore to assume that his expressed views are those he really holds were to do him deliberate injustice; but as to what he does not say, we may attribute to him what we please of it as his meaning, for we have no assurance that we do not then speak his mind, although he himself would conceal it.

Fortified with these and other solutions of my doubts, I fought and won my election. I had not been long in Parliament, however, before I found my conscience again in sad trouble, owing to the claims made upon me by the leaders of my party. I ran at once to him who had so enlightened me before, and asked him how much I was bound to do of that which my party demanded. You must do their will in everything, said he; for, as a good man were a bad Thug if, being of that sect, he should not commit murder on occasion, so, if you set up, as I did not expect you would, for doing only that you morally approve, you are dishonest in preferring your own applause to the discipline and objects of your party; but be careful not to sell your independence without getting the price of it into your pocket, or your conscience will for that reproach you very justly.

\* \* \*

The Whig doctrine that taxation and representation should go together implied the right to sell your vote to pay your taxes.



*Vir nullâ non donandus lauru*—a voter to whom it is fitting that a rabbit should be sent.





## THE PARLIAMENT OF PETERSBURG

"A Russian manifesto ordering the election of a representative body was issued on Thursday morning; the election took place during the afternoon and evening, and yesterday the newly elected body assembled and passed a police measure submitted to them by Captain Barānoff."  
—Morning Paper, April 1881.

Barānoff, go, catch us a Council of State—  
We too will a Parliament try;  
Have one ready to-morrow by half after eight—  
If you're late by a minute you die.

Give our goldsmith the order to make us a mace;  
Get our Speaker a full-bottomed wig,  
And a gown of black silk all bedizened with lace:  
'Tis the true constitutional rig.

Let our people elect whomsoever they please;  
Though some Nihilist rogues they return,  
They'll compare very well with some other M.P.'s,  
And in time may right principles learn.

Buy a journal—a big one—a gallon of ink—  
No, stay! let that be for to-night;  
The poor Members might take it for something to drink;  
Wait, and see if they're able to write.



Make haste to compose us a Speech from the Throne—

We our views would not lucidly state—

No phrases employ which are hard to disown ;

And don't use that word "vindicate."

Begone ! but to-morrow return at this hour,

And bring us a bundle of laws,

By our Parliament passed, for increasing the power

Of policemen—in Liberty's cause.



## THE PLAID PROSCRIBED

In the course of Germanising the British Army it was naturally argued by the Minister for War that, if our soldiers all wore spikes on their heads and trousers of a Teutonic fashion, they were likely to win victories as startling as Sedan. The contemplated reform would doubtless have been carried into effect, but that it was found more difficult to get the Highland regiments to put on the breeches than to take off their kilts.

Soldiers of Highland clans,  
Childers contemns you—  
Tight trews of black he plans;  
To them condemns you.

Come then in philabegs,  
Sporran, with claymore;  
Shout—though your brawny legs  
Silently say more.

Blow on the bagpipes loud  
Challenge to battle—  
Fly shall the Saxon crowd,  
Frighted as cattle.

Round send the fiery cross—  
Tow steeped in turpentine ;  
Britain shall learn her loss,  
When, by the Serpentine,

Nursemaids all lonely go,  
Weeping and walking ;  
With them, in tartans, no  
Highlander stalking.

If in the fight you lose  
(Childers prevailing)  
Kilts and your tartan trews—  
Then be there wailing.

Sad then the pibroch sound ;  
Sadly your snuff take ;  
Pass the old whisky round—  
More than enough take.

Sleep! They oppress you ;  
Knows slumber no sorrow ;  
Wake not to dress you  
Like Saxons, to-morrow.



## LE MANDAT

My confessor in matters political has lately had occasion to advise with me in one or two cases such as must have occurred to others besides myself. I will here set down his counsel for the comfort of them who need it ; since in this Parliament they may be many.

It is now a week or so since there came to me, from a body of thirty persons who were good enough to approve of my candidature at the last election, a remonstrance against a certain speech and vote of mine in a debate on the Hares and Rabbits Bill. In this complaint I was reminded of what was termed the *mandat* of my constituents, and was solemnly, and somewhat severely, admonished to take heed and obey it. I at once hastened to my confessor, and entreated him to clear up the difficulty in which I found my understanding and my conscience alike involved. When I had laid the question fully before him, he spoke thus :—

This expression of *mandat* is a recent importation from a country in which parliamentary government has not hitherto had any notable success. It assumes a relation between a member of Parliament and his constituents very different from that which the theory of our own Constitution intends, as I hope

soon to make clear to you. But first let me ask you who is the Mr. — who writes this remonstrance.

I replied that he was by profession, rather than in practice, a cobbler ; whereupon my confessor continued :—

There is an old English saw which has it that “Jack would be a gentleman if he could speak any French ;” and, though the learned Camden says of this that “our language hath risen but little, and the proverb proved untrue which so long had been used,” yet it is plain that our new masters are either too genteel to use the tongue of their fathers, or else they have found for us obligations not till now named nor known by Englishmen. Of late, indeed, I have seen too often in the newspapers this word *mandat*, and have even found it done into English as “the mandate of the electors”—an expression applicable, it may be, to a French *député*, but in no way fitted to an English representative.

Let us then consider the matter somewhat at large. And first, of whom is this *mandat* the command? You are member for Littleborough, and so represent every one of its electors ; for the minority are not unrepresented merely because they have voted for a candidate who has failed ; nor have they who go not to the poll renounced their claim upon the member for the town they live in.

But this *mandat*, said I, is that of the majority of my constituents.

That, replied my confessor, is by no means assured ; for it is acknowledged on all hands that the electors change their minds now and then ; and so you must say, if you would speak accurately, that for being what you are, you have merely the authority of

a majority of those who voted some months since, while the majority of to-day may be of quite another way of thinking.

This, said I, raises exactly the point on which I desire your counsel. At the time of my election I promised the Caucus of Thirty—then all-powerful in Littleborough, and not less awful than the Council of Ten—I promised them that, in deference to their opinion and the electors', I would vote in favour of the extermination of all small deer—excepting only Church mice, because these do pillage the priests. Since that time the Caucus of Thirty has been changed by an election, and now orders me to vote for the preservation of hares, because these beasts damage the turnips, which for the most part belong to the Tories. And this last order they also call the *mandat* I am bound to fulfil. Tell me now, I pray you, which is the true *mandat* of my constituents: for I find myself much perplexed by commands so contrary.

If, said my confessor, you were—as, I fear me, you are not—a representative elected by one party, but regarding yourself as entrusted with the suffrages of all, as long time was our English habit, you might follow your judgment and be quit of the matter with an easy conscience. But now I see not how you may be honest. You cannot resign your seat, since your successor could not be elected in time to vote upon this measure; and yet you cannot keep your promise in word without violating it in fact, nor in fact unless you should break your word. 'Tis a dilemma without escape for you. And observe well some of the consequences which cobblers bring on themselves when they meddle with French.

I suppose that if there is one thing your Caucus



of Thirty desires more earnestly than another it is the frequent opportunity of sending a member to Parliament.

They hold, said I, that, like Antaeus, we of the Commons are all the better for a fall to the earth now and then: that, as some renew their forces in baths of mud, so should we draw our strength from that low social *couche* which Mr. Bright named the "residuum"; and therefore they are agreed that no House of Commons should endure beyond one year, which is just eleven months more of life than they would allow to the House of Lords.

But if, said he, as this *mandat* assumes, the representative is simply to obey the orders of his constituents or Caucus whenever he receives them, there should never henceforth be any dissolution, nor general election; for it would be sufficient then to appoint deputies who should sit until death or disobedience put an end to their deputyship.

To this I objected that in such case all debate in Parliament were entirely useless; since no member might vote according to his convictions, but only upon the orders of his masters in that behalf.

My confessor inquired thereupon whether this fact would introduce any change in our present practice; and I must admit that, remembering the Whips and their ways, I had not at the moment any answer to make him. I therefore contented myself with pointing out that this system of a perpetual Parliament instructed minutely by the body of the electors would necessitate daily conferences of everybody, and hourly ballots for members of Caucus to instruct the deputy in the ever-varying wishes of the crowd—which were impracticable.

My confessor congratulated me on the intelligence I had shown, in at once perceiving the necessities of any method for expressing in our Statutes the will of the majority of the day. But, said he, it is to be observed that laws have never yet been made in this manner; and, had all men waited till most were agreed what law to make, it is more than probable that in all the world we should not yet have made one.

He then went on to remark—with some levity, as I thought—that the meddling of everybody in the business of legislation is not by any means an unmixed evil: for that we have already enough of laws, and need only a few more constables to make us obey them. He even—I know not if seriously—commended the French—since, said he, you have introduced their name—for lately unearthing certain old decrees and going to work with them, rather than waste time in discussing whether new Statutes should be passed; and said that a few clerks would find, ready made amongst the laws which by reason of our forgetfulness only we call obsolete, such weapons as would serve our Executive for years to come and give our Houses the holiday they ever long for.



## THE EASY CONSCIENCE

"The official has two consciences. The original conscience includes truthfulness, and a great many virtues which are not included in the official conscience."—Lord Rosebery.

How oft has the cynic ill-naturedly said  
Politicians no conscience possess ;  
Yet Lord Rosebery's friends have a couple per head,  
And were useless if furnished with less.

They've an everyday conscience : a delicate thing  
That shudders and shakes at a lie,  
Says the truth must be told though disaster it bring,  
That 'tis worse to dissemble than die.

But what use, says his lordship, in office to me  
Is a soul of such sensitive stuff?  
A good conscience prepared for imprinting should be,  
Like hot sealing-wax—plastic, but tough.

A good conscience official is something more rude  
Than an unemployed sinner requires ;  
It should most of the commonplace virtues exclude,  
To give play for one's factious desires.

It should never complain though you lie like a Greek—  
It should whisper no pious behest,  
If when one thing you think, you the opposite speak,  
But sit mute in the statesmanlike breast.

A man's conscience is not, as you've hitherto thought,  
A possession to prize and to keep ;  
It is made to be changed, to be sold, to be bought,  
To be soothed into torpor and sleep.

Let the moralists prose about goodness and grace ;  
I admit all they say to be true ;  
Still who keeps but one conscience must hunger for place ;  
So the wise man allows himself two.



## THE RED COAT

"Horse Guards, W.O., 25th November 1880.—The attention of the Field-Marshal Commanding in Chief having upon several occasions been called to the fact that officers quartered in garrison towns very rarely appear in uniform, unless in the actual performance of military duties, I have received his Royal Highness's commands to request that you will be so good as to point out to the staff and regimental officers serving in the district under your command, that this custom, which has become too prevalent of late years, is not in accordance with the spirit of the Queen's Regulations and Orders for the Army, Section 12, par. 7, and at the same time to enjoin upon them the propriety as well as the necessity of their wearing uniform throughout the day, *except* when engaged in recreations inconsistent with its use."

[It seems almost time to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire if any one has yet taken the slightest notice of the above Order.—*December 1902.*]

When Waterloo not yet was fought,  
While Europe for the fray was arming,  
The soldiers' uniform was thought  
By them, and all the maidens, charming.

Then coats were laced and hats were cocked,  
Then pantaloons were strapped so tightly  
The merest wrinkle would have shocked  
A regiment that dressed politely.

A looser age—in dress, at least—  
To that our grandsires knew succeeded ;  
And now the gaily garbed is priest,  
While Guardsmen come and go unheeded.

It seems almost as long ago  
As those now distant wars, the Punic,  
Since we an officer might know  
By sword and spurs, pelisse or tunic.

Perhaps 'twas well they should not walk  
Abroad, in regimental trapping,  
Who would not of Jomini talk,  
Nor Vauban read, nor study sapping.

But times have lately changed again ;  
Now sub-lieutenants lightly prattle  
Of Moltke, Marlbro', Prince Eugène,  
Of sap and siege, and plans of battle.



The heliograph, and rifled gun,  
The phalanx, and the spear, and javelin,  
Their thoughts engage till day is done ;  
They dream of *demi-lune* and ravelin.

So time it is they lay aside  
The civic morning coat and pot-hat,  
And dress, where'er they walk or ride,  
As men who study to be shot at.



## MARTINUS SCRIBLERUS IN IRELAND

The last sudden disappearance of the celebrated Martinus Scriblerus was attributed — with what probability I will leave others to determine — “to the jealousy of the Queen’s Ministry.” His whereabouts was, at the time his works were given to the world, uncertain or unknown ; and in the introduction to his writings we find his biographer saying :—“ The last time I heard from him was on occasion of his strictures on the ‘ Dunciad ’ ; since when, several years being elapsed, I have reason to believe this excellent person is either dead or carried by his vehement thirst of knowledge into some remote, or perhaps undiscovered, region of the world.” Subsequent investigation has revealed to us that the great philosopher, critic, and law reporter had betaken himself to Ireland.

The writings of Martinus Scriblerus were, as the learned are aware, scattered about the world under the names of many authors, and those recovered are stated, on the last page but one of the first book of his published works, to have been discovered in a certain house “near St. James’s.” This accounts for my being in possession of the remainder of this

pundit's MSS., amongst which I find what professes to be a report of a case decided in Ireland during the residence of Martinus in that country. No one who has read his report of the great case of *Stradling* versus *Stiles* will doubt the authenticity of this one. If any shall fancy that they catch in this writing allusions to modern things, let them remember that much was known to Martinus which is new to ourselves; e.g. his discovery of "a method to apply the force arising from the immense velocity of light to mechanical purposes."

With these prefatory remarks I present the remarkable case of—

*O'Noy v. O'Linn*

*En le premier an du Gouvernement du dictateur Parnell, Bryan O'Linn vient en banke le Tyran et demaund l'opinion des justices en cest case.*

*Recitel del case.*—Bryan O'Linn was tenant of a farm under a certain landlord, the which of the said Bryan demanded rent reserved and long since due; but this rent was refused, "*selon la loi*"—i.e. *Lex Parnelliana, Art. 1*. And thereupon the landlord did threaten recourse to a certain pretended Court (*soi disant* the Queen's Bench in Dublin). But Bryan, being moved thereunto by the intent so professed by his said lord against him, ran and fetched his gun, and returned armed therewith, but could not then find the said landlord, who had fled. Him did Bryan hotly pursue, and did overtake and shoot at. But the other (*c'est à dire*, the landlord) ran yet some little way, and in the field of O'Noy did fall dead, as it seemed. Whereupon Bryan took and carried away

the body ; but after, O'Noy *porte demaund* for a writ *habeas corpus* for the delivery to him of the body of the said landlord.

*Le Point.*—And so debate was had whether O'Noy or Bryan O'Linn should have the said lord, i.e. *corpus quod dominus fuit*.

*Pour le Pl.*—Twist of Counsel *pour le Pl.* O'Noy—*Juste est que le Pl. recouvrera.*

And first, a landlord is either a beast, *ferae naturae*, or vermin. *En cas* that he is a beast, *ferae naturae*, he belongeth, when slain, to him on whose land he fall, *ratione soli*, because of the interest in such land.

2. The right of a tenant under *Lex Parnelliana* extendeth only to the killing of his landlord ; and giveth no right to the body, or personal effects, of him (*corpus ejus, aut catalla*) unless he fall on the proper land of the tenant.

3. If—as seemeth most fit—a landlord be held to be not game at all, but vermin merely ; then is there no property of such things—and O'Noy may retake the landlord if and when he can.

*Pour le Defend.*—Quirk of Counsel—*Semble que non.*

1. That a landlord is a beast is allowed ; but *moy semble*, he is “ground game” ; and mark, *pour quoi* he is not protected by the Parliament. And so the tenant shall have him for the hunting.

2. *En outre.*—If the landlord had been started on the land of O'Noy, peradventure *al contrary*. But he was started on the holding of another, and after did run on to the land of *le Pl.*, and did there fall, and so *le Defend.* may of right retake his quarry.

3. And reason is that this landlord does belong *propter industriam*, as is said, to *le Defend.*, who pursued and slew him with his proper gun; and moreover does so belong *ratione impotentiae*, because of his inability to escape from his pursuer. And for this my *Lord Coke* was cited.

4. But it will further appear how *le Defend.* had a property in the landlord. Thus he was Bryan's landlord, and so known (*sic appellatus est*). And now if I kill my landlord, he does not thereupon (*ipso facto*) become yours nor another's. And so *le Defend.* shall retain his landlord.

*La réponse.*—Twist *réplique ainsi pour le Pl.*

1. *Non concessit* (it is a lie) that the landlord was not started on ground of O'Noy, since *certes* he was alive and running on that land, and there was shot.

2. The landlord was a part of O'Linn's land, because he had lived on the rent which is issue of the land. And therefore his body must belong to *le Pl.*, like as the land of *le Defend.* would do should it slip or be brought by flood (*apportée par le Shannon*) on to the land of O'Noy.

3. The defunct is not now the landlord of *le Defend.*; for he is no longer a landlord at all, but dry land merely (*de la poussière*). He was O'Linn's landlord only while O'Linn was his tenant; for the relation was mutual, and has been determined by death of one of the parties.

*Et jugement est demaundé.*

*O'Rogue Justiciar donne jugement de tout le banke.*

*Nous semble* that the landlord slain by *le Defend.* should belong to *le Pl.* The landlord is a beast of



chase, and belongeth in general to the man that killeth him, *propter industriam*—because of his labour well bestowed in clearing the land of such. But this shall be only where the landlord is slain on land of his own tenant, or on waste-land unreclaimed. And *per contra* where he be slain by one tenant on the land of another; for in such case it is meet that he remain for the fertilising and improving of the soil he wrongfully trampled on and hurt. *Similiter* of weeds, tares, and the like, which are the property of the owner of the soil *ratione soli*, though he did not plant them, but an enemy did it. And none may go upon the land of another to remove therefrom anything, nor to reap the crops. *Sed nota*, of the crop of landlords exception is made; and this injurious harvest may be cut down on any one's land by any, because public policy does require the extermination of all who let land for rent, and so the trespass is excused. Wherefore the landlord shall be given to *O'Noy le Pl.*; but, *al contrary*, not so of his watch; for such things better not the agriculture, as bones do. And so the landlord's ticker (*montre à répétition*) shall be given to *le Defend.*, who slew him.

*Jugement fut donné pour le Pl. et pour le Defend., par conséquent.*

*Nota per Scriblerus.*—But after judgment given, great clamour was made, for it did appear that the landlord did but feign death, and during the disputing of the cause arose, and from the house of O'Linn, where he had been carried, fled away to England. Whereupon the Court did resolve that he was *utlagatus* and *inciviliter mortuus*, and did ordain that he be followed and shot to death, unless mean-



while (*nisi prius*) he should return and submit himself to be *Boiscotté* (*verbum barbarum*) until he should die of starvation.

And this judgment was entered of Record in the New Court of Injustice in Ireland.



It is the persistent misfortune of Ireland to sit at the gate of Dives, while O'——, and O'——, and O'—— lick her sores.



## L'ESPRIT DES LOIS

In Ireland now they all complain—  
And each with show of reason—  
That laws permit, and laws restrain,  
Both loyalty and treason :

There are no laws, the peasants say,  
Save such as rule the breezes ;  
So each may go his chosen way  
And do whate'er he pleases.

No law there is, the priesthood teach,  
Save thine, divine expedience,—  
This gospel only may one preach  
And look for strict obedience.

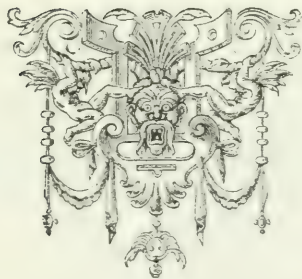
Some laws, the landlords say, were meant  
For beasts of chase. The same laws  
Might save us, if the Government  
Would put in force the Game Laws.

“ *Chacun pour soi,* ” these make reply,  
“ *Et le bon Dieu pour tout.* ” So  
Let each on his own gun rely,  
And arm himself like Crusoe.

One law, says Gladstone, yet remains ;  
Though bars don't make a cage, or  
Stone walls a gaol, the League in chains  
Is legalised *vis major*.

Then Leaguers cry, You banish laws,  
Or surely one might smash a  
Thick head in this our holy cause  
Nor fear a *lettre de cachet*.

In Ireland thus they all explain—  
And each with show of reason—  
How laws permit, and eke restrain,  
Both loyalty and treason.



## A RADICAL RIME

Oh, what can we do for the Boers?  
Now our troops they have slaughtered by scores,  
    We admit that their treason  
    Has excellent reason;  
So England their mercy implores.

Independence we'll give them, of course,  
Since they threaten to take it by force;  
    For there's nothing so wrong  
    As oppressing the strong;  
'Tis a sin that brings endless remorse.

It is not that fighting we shirk—  
We preserve all our taste for such work;  
    But when wrong, with contrition,  
    We make "proud submission";  
What a charming phrase! borrowed from Burke.

Then we'll leave unavenged in their graves  
Our soldiers—more slaughter it saves—  
    An indemnity pay  
    To the Boers, nor betray  
An offensive regard for their slaves.

For the Boers' love of freedom is such  
That the slightest control is too much;  
    And all must agree  
    That a man is not free  
If he may not keep slaves, say the Dutch.

We'll an abject apology write,  
Such as Gladstone knows how to indite ;  
Then go down on our knees  
In the dirt, if they please,  
In a penitent's garment of white.

*Mea culpa*, old England shall say ;  
For an amnesty heartily pray ;  
Flagellated and shriven,  
Confessed, half-forgiven,  
From the Cape she shall hasten away.

Of Cronje we'll make a C.B.,  
And Joubert a K.C.M.G. ;  
While it's well understood  
We shall hang General Wood,  
If with Kruger he fail to agree.



## THE SUZERAIN-QUEEN

"The word 'suzerainty,' I believe, in modern times, is perfectly well known in international law. It is undoubtedly quite distinct from sovereignty, while it has marked relations to sovereignty. . . . I quoted 'suzerainty' because it is the word the Government have advisedly used in their communications with the Boers, and which will be incorporated in the settlement."—Mr. Gladstone.

In consequence of the defeat of a few hundred British on Majuba Hill early in 1881, Sir Evelyn Wood was forced by the Government to enter into the Convention which established those impossible relations between British and Boers which have been brought to an end in the recent annexation of the two Boer States.

You complain that I have been of forward policy the foe,  
Nor have honours for our country ever sought;  
Yet not Beaconsfield himself has such a diadem to show  
As this Crown that I from Africa have brought.

He made our Queen the Empress of the Indies. What a name!  
In such title no magnificence I see;  
Of the Transvaal she, but yesterday, the Suzerain became;  
The Suzerain! Ah! that style she owes to me.

Yes! she's Suzerain of the Transvaal. How I linger on the word;  
Little meaning, it appears to say so much;  
At St. James's, as at Birmingham, with pleasure 'twill be heard;  
And with even more enjoyment by the Dutch.



Pray does Suzerain mean Sovereign? when they ask me, I reply,  
With its meaning I have nothing now to do;  
We chose the name advisedly. I cannot tell you why;  
If I did, perchance I mightn't tell you true.

It may signify the hoisting of our flag upon a pole;  
Yet, perhaps, foretells the hauling of it down;  
But, howe'er that be, it has a handsome sound upon the whole;  
And it signifies, at least, a half a Crown.

Of peace I'll sing the victories, how cheap they are and good;  
How defeat is really conquest, I'll explain;  
And elucidate the truth—as yet too little understood—  
That to lose is but a better way to gain.

I will institute an Order of the Empire I have won,  
Though the Quakers of my Cabinet demur;  
Pale as fear shall be its ribbon, and its star a setting sun,  
With, for motto, *Tout est gagné—fors l'honneur.*



## JOHN SMITH

It may be doubted still, since it always has been, whether one ever is contented at a given moment simply with the incident of that present. In the opinion of Mr. Pope "Man never is, but always to be, blest." Others—and among these was John Smith—have held that our enjoyment in what we call the present is really found in momentary recollection of the events of the past. He did not come to this opinion in early youth—there was not then within his view enough of water passed under the bridge the while he stood upon it. But when first I met him John Smith was—well, *un homme mûr*. His circumstances were such that he should have been most miserable—nor had he at any time had better luck or health or the prospect of either. He came of an undistinguished and indistinct family—as is plain enough. Born in the deadliest level of the middle class he had not the urgent necessity to rise which inflates the most abased, nor the hand stretched down to lift up which is extended to him whose poor condition may diminish the consideration of relatives above him, it is true, but not so high as with their sublime heads—or the coronets upon them—to touch the stars.

A small man—as became his station—was John Smith, and dressed in a fashion somewhat older than

his years. His manner was so gentle, the expression of his views so inclined to be apologetic, that at first I took him to be a man who held, or had lately held, high office in the State. There was about him such an air of deference as one remarks in a Lord Justice or a Cabinet Minister.

When I came upon him he was regarding, with a look at once critical and nostalgic, a well-known picture by Constable. Had I not mentioned that we were in the National Gallery? As I passed behind him he turned with what I took for a slight movement of impatience, merely that little which almost every man feels for every other within his view.

"I beg your pardon, sir," said I—for, having been but little abroad, I am not without some trace of good manners—"I fear that I have incommoded you, and the light of London, had one the whole of it, is but a *chiaroscuro*."

The little man raised his hat, thus misleading me further into thinking him a person of some importance, and replied in the softest voice I ever heard: "On the contrary, I looked round to see who it might be that added the charm of a moving shadow to this landscape, and afforded me the pleasure of believing myself not here, but there again, sir, in the Vale of Dedham itself."

"'Tis a shame," said I, "that they should vulgarise Suffolk; yet I hear that one may now make the tour of Constable's country as easily as of the Holy Land, and with the same guidance, and thus the Stour is to-day no more sacred than the Jordan."

The stranger pointed to a little patch of paint where, owing doubtless to some cunning overlaying

of glaze, the sunlight seemed to linger. "Those were my father's fields, that one is the forty-acre piece, and he lies there, behind that tower," he said, with a look that settled on a perpendicular grey streak in the middle distance. "Somehow I shouldn't care to go there in a *char-à-bancs*, with a bugle."

"No," said I, "with whatever pretence at merriment one may leave the paternal acres for one's regiment, or the Temple, or some approach to Downing Street"—and I watched for any movement to betray to me the line of his advance in life—"it is not in an omnibus that one would choose to return to them."

"By no means," said he. "In a hearse, rather." He smiled very slightly as he spoke, and standing back a little from the picture, while he shaded his eyes with his hands. "Look, there is Dedham, and here, to the left, is Langham—over against it Higham on the hill; and there below it is Stratford, where we caught the great pike, you and I"; and he indicated a fleck of white which, contemplated from a little distance, became the tumbling waters of a weir.

"I had forgotten that," said I, desiring to be better informed concerning the old gentleman, and therefore affecting that ignorance which is the beginning of all learning.

"Surely not," he continued. "The old pike, the tyrant of the pool, who took the miller's ducks as a trout the May flies; who swallowed old Jackson's plummet when he was testing the depth for gudgeon, and pulled down water-rats or frogs indifferently. I can see him now, as he lies among the weeds—and there, too, is the miller." And he bent a little closer towards the picture.

If we still talked together, it is not that I was any longer puzzled concerning him. I looked round for the friend who doubtless loitered near to lead him home, the old man who imagined that I, who had not half his age, had gone a-fishing with him as a boy.

But no one was to be seen. The old gentleman and I were alone in the room, and he moved on to another painting. By this time we were by so far acquainted that we passed along the walls in company, stopping now and then to admire or criticise, according to our tastes. A picture of Turner's led me to ask my little friend if he had ever been at Venice, and I added for his information that the town contained much of interest, specifying Chioggia, the Casa d'Oro, and the Ponte di Rialto, as I fancied I pronounced all these words with a very foreign facility.

He replied that he had been there many times, with Ruskin. He called the town *Venezia la bella*; he had peeped into the *bocca di Leone*, had been *sotto i piombi*, had stood *tra le colonne* where Carmagnola *era messo a morte*—and I found that my innocent and, I confess it, commonplace remark had awakened in him a host of memories concerning *calle* and *piazzetta*, *palazzi*, and *chiese*, *il consiglio dei dieci*, *Veronese* and *Robusti*, *Verrocchio*, *Bragadino* and *Manin*.

"So you knew Mr. Ruskin," said I.

"Yes; we were together at Christchurch—the House, you know,—and great friends, though I wore no tuft, for my father didn't sell sherry," he went on. And much more he said which I cannot recall, nor is it necessary to the understanding of this matter.

As we parted in Trafalgar Square I learned that



his name was John Smith, and that he, very appropriately, lived in Bloomsbury.

Then I knew that all my first impressions concerning him were wrong. There was then no eminent contemporary Smith, but only the *progeniem vitiosiore* of Adam, Sydney, and some others; nor has any man of mark lived in Bloomsbury since Murray, who himself, as all know, is now "no more than Tully or than Hyde."

John Smith and I had occasion to see one another many times after this, our first and casual meeting; and I found him full of pleasant recollections—for, to listen to him, surely no man had had a happier nor more eventful life. Born, as he assured me, amid scenes not less than Ashbourne itself romantic, he was in the fields a rustic poet with Bloomfield; at Eton, with Gladstone, a statesman; at Oxford, a man of taste; at Cambridge, of learning; in Paris, of pleasure; in Italy, of the Carbonari and the thousand of Messina.

It was some time later that I discovered how Mr. Smith had never in his life been twenty miles from Covent Garden.

I learned, too, how these various tales of his had led certain unimaginative persons to pursue the little man because he offended in being rich without property, and contented without having what passes in the world for sufficient reason; and it was thus that—no matter where—I became acquainted with his simple method of being happy. True, his circumstances were miserable and never had been other. Are yours so, what do you do but endeavour to forget them? You drink, perhaps, or you gamble—you smoke tobacco, or perchance opium. Yet



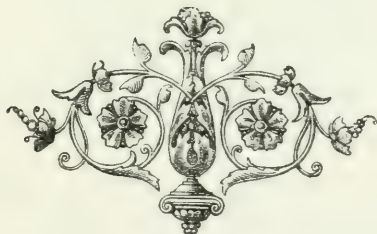
you do not forget, and maybe even the suicides cannot completely.

John Smith, not having had the chance to play a leading part in the Comedy of Life, had chosen to sit himself down a *vacuo plausor theatro*. So, the stage being empty, he invented scenery to his taste, a plot to accord, *dramatis personae* whom it was a pleasure to meet; and he found the days which never were as real as those moments we call the past; while he assured me that, for the present, there is no such thing.

"I choose," said he, "to imagine myself what I never was, and live in times and places where I have never been,

'And there into delight my soul deceive.'"

I fear me that John Smith has made but few converts to his doctrine of cheap contentment; but since he has never made any attempt to exclude another from that sunlight—which Constable has stayed for him, as Joshua might, upon those Suffolk acres which in Chancery he claims as his own—I can look forward to yet another lesson from him and hope to profit by it.



## CARPE ÆTERNITATEM

Again live o'er each happier hour long fled,  
These may'st thou keep, though counted with the past ;  
Whilst yet thy memory backward thou can'st cast,  
Return ; and move amongst the friendly dead.

Cling to this day—the point beneath thy feet—  
That slides, refusing aye thy step to bear,  
As slipping sand, or never constant air ;  
Taste of each stream that glides the rest to meet.

Extend thine hand toward the time to be,  
In fancy live the day that may not dawn ;  
Nor, fearful, on the future trembling fawn ;  
So shalt thou have beyond what eye may see.

Thus shall thy life be full through every space ;  
No Epicure's, nor Ankret's, selfish waste  
Of self in sloth, or yet more greedy haste.  
Till thy glad soul shall reach her last abiding-place.

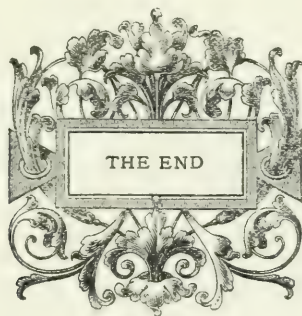
That the very wicked should possess great wealth or good fortune is not on the whole displeasing to the less favoured remnant—for there is in men so firm a persuasion of justice that they enjoy with hardly a question, as a present pleasure to themselves, that miserable hereafter which they confidently anticipate for others.



Nothing more clearly proves the wickedness of mankind, and their inveterate inclination to robbery, than that they should be so easily reconciled to possessing little by the teaching that even this is beyond their deserving.



Je crois bien que l'on ne doit pas trop s'attacher à la vie—même à la vie éternelle.



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